

Minutes SJAHSA 19th Annual General Meeting held online, 29th October 2020

by Edith Khangure (Deputy Secretary)

Opening and Welcome

The meeting was opened by the Society's President, Dr David Fahey at 8-00pm AEST. He welcomed everyone embracing the new technology and participating in this first on line AGM of the Historical Society.

Attendance and Apologies

Attendance – J Cheshire (VIC), R Wilson (VIC), K Brown (TAS), V Smith (VIC), S Pearce (VIC), D Fahey (NSW), A Mawdsley (VIC), B Caslake (VIC), J Spencer (NSW), F Macneil (NSW), A Eade (VIC), R Burgess (QLD), B Counce (WA), S Finlay (NSW), C Wassertheil (VIC), I McGeachie (SA), N Dine (VIC), R Anker (VIC), K Anker (VIC), E Brentnall (VIC), F Leditschke (QLD), B Taylor (QLD), T Andrews (QLD), C Oxley (VIC), C Schelfout (WA), E Khangure (WA), K Miller (NSW), T Skilton (NZ), J Ward (NSW), F Dunston (NT), S Moore (QLD), L Dansie (SA), K Dansie (SA), J Butler (NSW), V Little (QLD), T Mayhew (NSW), D Bache (VIC), M Bache (VIC), N Conn (ACT), S Bone (NSW), M Knight (NSW), G Neylon (VIC), D Heard (SA), R Hurford (NSW), G Lluede (ACT), I Howie-Willis (ACT), P Copeland (VIC), A Welsh-Hussain (TAS), T Sugget (QLD).

Apologies – B Fotheringham (SA), D Bat (NT), E Ellis (NSW), I Nicolson (VIC), N Warne (WA), J Jones (WA), P Kemp (QLD), P Poole (NT), R Southby (USA), V Dempsey (ACT), T Walton (UK).

Confirmation of Minutes of the 18th AGM

The draft minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia held at the RACV City Club, Melbourne on the 4th May 2019, and as previously circulated, were accepted.

Moved L Dansie, Seconded T Mayhew – carried

Matters arising from the minutes of last AGM

Dr Ian Howie-Willis advised the meeting that our society had now joined the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and that he would send the link to this to all our members. Dr Fahey suggested that this could be included in the next newsletter and that with respect to COVID it was a useful resource. Dr Howie-Willis concurred, especially with information re funding and supporters. Prof John Pearn advised that the federation meets at various venues around Australia and that it might be possible for our society to host them in the future. They offer fellowship in Australian history and are a very prestigious organisation. Dr Fahey requested that this could also be detailed in the next newsletter and Dr Howie- Willis agreed.

President's annual report, discussion and adoption

Dr Fahey introduced the reports section and suggested that as we were not so limited in time that more detail than normal could be included. He then formally tabled his own report which had been circulated previously highlighting the difficulties caused by COVID and with everyone working in limited ways. This situation has resulted in an on line history

seminar, as per the circulated flyer, scheduled for 14/11/2020 using a similar link as today. We are fortunate to have a number of international speakers participating.

Dr Fahey then acknowledged the Eye Hospital history project currently underway by Dr Howie-Willis, Prof Pearn and Dr Matthew Glozier. He expressed his pride in their work and how he is looking forward to seeing the final product.

The President then congratulated Mr Todd Skilton on his recent appointment as Order Librarian and how we are looking forward to working with him.

Dr Fahey advised that the national office have agreed to host an Historical Society website on the national server. He envisages that this will take one – two years to develop and will provide increased access to historical articles, presentations and photographs. Dr Fahey noted proposed new changes in the Membership forms but deferred discussion on this until later in the meeting. He asked for questions/objections; there were none.

Moved P Copeland, Seconded L Dansie – carried

Treasurer and membership annual report, discussion and adoption

Mr Paul Copeland presented the Treasurer's report. His highlights included the fact that the society's accounts were in great shape although they had not been audited yet. Mr Bob Devere was reviewing the Membership data base and working through some issues related to this.

He thanked the national office for their support with a special acknowledgement of help from Ms Gabrielle Lheude. There were no questions. Dr Fahey thanked him for the interim report and asked that it be accepted.

Moved J Spencer, Seconded V Smith - carried

Publications: journal, quarterly newsletter, website on-line international journal

Dr Howie-Willis noted that he would not comment on the website development as Dr Fahey was handling this and then presented the Publications report. The sixth volume of *One St John*, the international on line journal, was prepared by Prof Pearn, Dr Glozier and himself and published during the year. He thanked Gabby Luede for her hard work in all aspects of the design and final compilation of the journal. Volumes 7 and 8 for 2021 and 2022 were being planned. Dr Howie-Willis commented that it had taken a long time for the journal to be noticed and thanked Mr Todd Skilton for his support. Whilst the journal was intended as an international venture with Australia initiating the project until London could take responsibility; it was still with Australia, but he hoped that the new Order Librarian would take it over. There were no questions and Dr Fahey thanked him.

Moved S Moore, Seconded A Mawdsley – carried

At this point Dr Fahey thanked the Chancellor for joining the meeting

Triennial Elections and Appointments

Dr Fahey invited the Society's Secretary, Mr James Cheshire to deal with this segment. The details of the positions falling vacant in 2020 were previously circulated. All incumbents were prepared to continue and as there were no other members nominating, all were to be re-elected. One new appointment was to be made – Mr Brodie Taylor to join the committee.

Moved J Spencer, Seconded T Andrews - carried

Mr Cheshire congratulated everyone on their re-election/appointment.

Reports from States/Territories: reports to be tabled for noting; highlights only commented upon

Dr Fahey introduced the state/territory reports beginning with New South Wales.

- **New South Wales**

Highlights of Dr Glozier's report included the challenge of their Archives moving into a temporary venue pending a new purpose-built facility being developed. COVID has restricted all research and the activities of the NSW Historical Interest group.

Victoria

Dr Mawdsley commented on the major renovation of their Museum and its spectacular reopening by the (now) Lord Prior, Prof Mark Compton. After the renovation, re-cataloguing the entire collection was necessary as new locations had to be recorded. The Museum donated a number of photographs for the fiftieth anniversary of the Southern Aurora train derailment.

Dr Fahey thanked Dr Mawdsley for his report.

South Australia

Dr Fotheringham's report was presented by Mrs Lyn Dansie. The loss of the lease at Unley was a major blow but a new home has been provided at Brighton. Packing up is underway and it is hoped that the move will take place in December 2020. Three new display cabinets were acquired with funds donated by History SA. Because of the pandemic the Museum was closed and will not reopen until the new venue is ready. The report thanked a number of people who support it with special thanks to Lyn Dansie, David Heard and Yvonne Routledge.

Dr Fahey expressed his disappointment at the loss of the Unley lease but was delighted that a new home had been found. Mrs Dansie noted that HQ had helped offering two sites from which they selected Brighton.

Western Australia

Dr Edith Khangure presented the WA report. The first eight months of the 2019-2020 year were quite normal with satisfactory progress in all facets of Museum and Archival work. As with all other jurisdictions, COVID had closed everything down in March. Whilst the volunteers were allowed to resume their work at the end of June community visits are still cancelled indefinitely. A major rebuilding project will result in the Heritage Centre closing in mid 2021 and the collections will either move to a temporary venue or go into storage.

Dr Fahey asked if there was any idea of where it might move to and was advised that whilst some local buildings have been leased there were many departments and training rooms to house and the future of the Centre was unclear. He noted that this would be a stressful time.

Tasmania

There was no report available.

Northern Territory

Mr Frank Dunstan presented the report with apologies from Ms Dawn Bat who was unable to attend. Mr Dunstan advised that NT did not have a very active group and there was little to report. Much of their collection is in storage and he did not know the current location of their Archives. Mr Dunstan advised that he was working on another book but because of problems with publishing it will probably be in an electronic format.

Dr Fahey thanked him for the report.

Australian Capital Territory & the Priory

Dr Howie-Willis presented the report for the ACT and the Priory. The written report gave details of the Priory collection and its history as well as the impact related to COVID on its activities.

The major activity of the year has been work on the writing of the official 140th anniversary history of the St John Eye Hospital Group by himself, Prof Pearn and Dr Glozier. Dr Glozier is the lead historian and has written most of the 20 chapters whilst John Pearn's research and academic reputation had been very useful and also given the project considerable medical credentials. They had finished writing in March 2020 and the manuscript is currently being reviewed by the Trustees' Project Steering Group. Publication details are yet to be negotiated. The launch date is planned for St John's Day in 2022 and it is hoped that the Grand Prior will officiate. Ms Sandra Moore asked Dr Howie-Willis about the launch and whether it might be on-line. She was advised that currently the authors do not even know what form the book will take – this is a matter for the Trustees to decide and there are options. Another launch in Jerusalem is a possibility with live streaming of the event. Dr Allan Mawdsley asked if the book includes anything re Australians who did fellowships in Jerusalem and was advised that it did.

Other Business

- Ms Angelina Welsh-Hussain had a question re the purpose of activity groups as per Dr Glozier's NSW Historical Interest group. Dr Fahey advised that all states/territories have groups to do research and recommended that she contact Dr Glozier for information. She was interested specifically in Tasmania and had emailed a number of people in April but without success. Mr Cheshire told her he would make contact with her off line. Dr Mawdsley offered to contact Mr Neil Dine who had been in Tasmania for many years and would talk about supporting a revival of the Tasmanian group. Dr Howie-Willis also stated that the national office would help. Ms Welsh-Hussein thanked everyone for their offers of assistance.
- Dr Fahey advised that the E-Flyer for the History Seminar on November 14th would be sent out tomorrow. It will be our second international seminar, the first having been in Sydney in 2012.
- Mr Cheshire congratulated Dr Glozier on his recently gazetted admission in to the Order as an Officer.
- Dr Howie-Willis congratulated Mr John Ward on his promotion to Knight of Grace in the Order and Dr Fahey on becoming a Member of the Order of Australia earlier this year.
- Dr Fahey returned to the issue of the society's Membership form. It is currently a 2 page document which is unwieldy and a new 1 page version is needed. He had previously noted that the national office has provided the society with a membership email address. Mr Ward asked when subscriptions were due and was advised by Mr Spencer that we follow the calendar year although members sometimes cannot remember. Mr Devere commented that when subscriptions are paid a receipt is issued for reference. Dr Mawdsley asked if the nomination details could be left blank to facilitate new membership applications. Mr Sugget asked about an option of not filling in a renewal form every year. This question was

supported by Mr David Vaughan Smith. Dr Fahey agreed these were fair questions which would be minuted but we will continue as we are now until phase 2 of the revision process is completed. There were no objections.

Moved John Spencer, Seconded Neil Dine - Carried

- Dr Howie-Willis raised two further issues. Firstly, he expressed his thanks to Dr Neil Conn, the society's patron, for his contribution to St John history especially *One St John* and, secondly, his thanks to Dr Fahey and Mr Cheshire for their work in making this meeting happen.
- Dr Conn responded that he was pleased to be a part of the society's progress and success in promoting St John history in Australia and internationally.

Closing comments and Meeting Close

Dr Fahey asked the Rt Rev Bishop Herford to share a prayer with all participants. Bishop Herford responded with a prayer for all St John members worldwide.

Having thanked Bishop Herford and one and all for their presence and contributions, Dr Fahey closed the meeting at 9-13pm AEST.